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THE SCHOOL OF LIFE.  
BY ANNA MARIA HOWITT.—ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHORESS.

CHAPTER II.

Each to each we are mysteries ;  
Nor can we guess what we may be,  
Except by what a glance can seize.

*Henry Sutton.*

Ah, children, children ! never grieve those you love ; never lose an opportunity of doing a kindness to those you love ; never give way to bitterness and hardness, else you will lay up a punishment for yourselves which will pursue you as with a whip of scorpions !—*Mary Howitt.*

It would be a curious surprise to us could we see laid out before us, as on a chart, the intermingling lines of life of dearest friends, of deadliest foes, of lovers, of future wives and husbands. Up to a certain point their destinies have appeared to the superficial looker-on, to themselves even, as widely separate ; yet in many an instance, could we but obtain the secret clue to the two lives, they have, unconsciously to each other, wandered on side by side, or crossed and recrossed each other in their separate orbits with a marvellous pertinacity.

Thus Leonard Mordant was quite unconscious, as he passed through the picturesque village of Wilford, on his way to Clifton-grove, that hé, in a rosy-faced urchin of some thirteen years old, encountered an individual whose fate would in years to come be singularly linked together with his own. Leonard Mordant, the genius, the would-be great painter, the R.A. expectant.

This important individual was opening the shutters of one of those singularly picturesque little thatched cottages of that quaint, old-fashioned village. There was something so fresh and pleasing in the whole scene, that the bright, youthful face of the boy, with his clear, frank eyes and golden hair, as he looked out of the dusky cottage window, putting back the grey shutters—the long, dagger-like icicles hanging down from the thick eaves, with the rays of the up-rising sun glittering upon them—and the pure, untrodden snow making the fresh colouring of the lad's face all the richer and brighter from contrast — fixed themselves deeply in Leonard's artist-soul as one of those exquisite combinations which nature is unceasingly weaving for the delight of poets and painters. Leonard observed the lad's face with an almost unconscious interest, and then sank back again into his absorbing speculations regarding his own fate.

The boy's countenance looked bright enough in the glowing beams of the morning sun ; but had Leonard chanced to pass the same, little cottage some five hours latter, he would have seen a very different expression upon it. He would have seen a cloud of the most decided ill-temper overshadowing those frank, clear eyes : he would have seen that sweet mouth pouting with most unmitigated crossness ! And all that he would have remembered would have been how a little country bumpkin had bounced out of a cottage, muttering in a very surly manner between his clenched teeth, and pulling very hard at a grand new red and green comforter, which was tightly tied round his throat. Had Leonard cared to watch this exhibition of childish rage, he would have observed how the boy, having advanced several paces from the cottage, pulled off the comforter, striking it violently upon the ground, and exclaiming—

“The nasty thing ! I hate it—I can't abide it—I can't abide worsted things—they tickles one so ! And that grandmother knows, *that* she does !—I'd like to tear it, that I would !”

And Leonard might have seen, had he still cared to watch the lad, how the door of the little cottage again flew open, and how a tidy old woman, also very cross, appeared, shouting out at the pitch of her voice, and shaking her fist at him—

“Johnny ! Johnny ! I saw thee, that I did ! thou bad lad ! thou ungrateful, bad chap ! I'll never knit thee any more comforters—see if I will !”

“Don't, then, grandmother—I hate 'em ! they tickles a body so !”—and he would have seen how Johnny hereupon stamped with his heavy old shoes upon one end of the nice new com-

forter, pulling the other end up with his hands till he tore it in earnest. And then he would have seen how the old grandmother rushed out, and, beginning to box Johnny's ears, ended by crying bitterly ; and how Johnny, vouchsafing the poor old soul no other comfort than the torn comforter, doggedly trudged off towards Nottingham.

It is grievous to relate such a change in the bright-faced little lad of the morning, but such, nevertheless, was the scene which occurred before the pretty thatched cottage, about one o'clock of the eventful 15th of December, 1830. And as this 15th of December is a day of considerable importance to the said little Johnny, or John Wetherley, as we must later on in our story respectfully call him, let us inquire further into the origin of this quarrel.

Johnny usually worked for a farmer of the village, but the severe frost having put an end to all out-door labour for the present, Johnny had a holiday until the frost should break up again. Johnny and his grandmother, Sally Wetherley, lived alone, and Johnny being what is usually called “a handy lad,” made himself in his holidays so extremely useful to the old woman, that some twenty times a day she exclaimed, laughing, that she “only wished she could keep Johnny always as her servant of all work, and live like a lady.” This very morning, after opening the shutters at seven o'clock, how busy he had been ! You would never have fancied Johnny could go into a pet, had you only watched him setting the breakfast-things for his dear merry old grandmother out upon that funny black tea-tray, that stood upon the little walnut stand before the fire, or toasting her a bit of bread, which he buttered with dripping ! And then both having breakfasted, he eating “dry-bread and pull-it,” as he called it, instead of toast and dripping, he had washed up the breakfast-things like the tidiest of little servants, had chopped the wood, brought it in, fetched water from the river—had swept out the house, and peeled the potatoes for his and his grandmother's dinner—and now having been in a very great hurry to finish everything—he said,—

“Grandmother; I've attended to all the little jobs, and I want *you* now to do something for me—will you, dear old grann ?” asked the lad coaxingly, and laying his cheek upon his old grandmother's head as she sat warming her feet at the fire.—“I want you, grandmother, to sit quietly in your arm-chair a bit, as you do on Sundays—for I want to try to make a picture of you. I want to try and make one with the colours Mr. Brewster gave me; the day after he laughed so much at my painting the view of the church with your powder-blue and mustard !”

“Make a pictur of *me*, lad !” returned his grandmother. “Bless thee, lad ! dos't thou relly think, then, thou couldst make a *pictur* of me ? But thou'dst better try thy hand, Johnny, upon smethin' handsomer than my wizzen old face, it's all so full of crows'-feet, and such like !”

“Now I think, grandmother,” replied Johnny, looking up from an old tea-chest which stood in the window, and out of which he was bringing with much care a new juvenile paint-box, and several sheets of cartridge paper,—“now, I think, grandmother, that you have a very nice, dear, old face, a very *pretty* face, that I do ;” and Johnny, setting down his paint-box, began kissing his grandmother upon her eyes and her cheeks, and even upon her double-chin—till the merry old woman laughed so heartily, that she nearly fell off her

chair—"Yes, I do indeed think you *very* pretty, grandmother," said the lad, still more coaxingly and affectionately; "and you must just sit still a bit, now won't you?"

But the old woman declared so vehemently that it was not "her natriment to sit still upon her chair," and that "she couldn't believe it were Sunday," that Johnny would never certainly have persuaded her to let him take her picture unless a brilliant idea had struck him, and this was to give his grandmother her knitting. And so away he ran to the drawer in an old press where the old dame kept her knitting. However, before he could open the drawer, his grandmother was after him, and pushing him away, cried, "Get off with thy impudence, get off with thee! Thou must na come here; every one keep to their own concarns." And Johnny, who in reality cared more about his picture than about the old woman's private drawer, and seeing her quietly take out her stocking to knit, arranged his paper and colours very contentedly, and Sally Wetherley sitting down at last with her knitting, the important picture was commenced.

It was a clever, spirited likeness of the old woman that the lad traced upon his cartridge paper; there were all the curious lines and markings of the face indicated, though most rudely, with such life-like expression, that the young artist glanced with surprise as he saw the success of his attempt.

"Why, grandmother!" cried he, "your face looks really, only its coloured, like one of the three pictures in black frames that Mr. Brewster has hanging up in the room where he writes his sermons! I wish you'd only seen them, grandmother. I'd a good look at them t'other night when he gave me those Penny Magazines." And in truth the sketch did resemble these pictures, which were rare etchings after Albert Dürer. The hand and eye of little Johnny were the rare hand and eye of a born artist; but how richly endowed the lad was, neither he nor his poor old grandmother had as yet the faintest inkling.

Johnny Wetherley was holding up his sketch for the wondering admiration of the good old woman, when a knock at the door suddenly disturbed them, and the door opening, there stood before the curtseying, surprised grandmother and the bashful boy-artist, a commanding-looking gentleman, and by his side a slender girl of twelve or thirteen.

"So here we find our young *Giotto* in the very act, Honoria!" said the gentleman, turning to his youthful companion.

"Will not his honour be seated! Johnny, Johnny, why doesn't thou run for a cheer, thou idle lad; doesn't thou see the young lady has no cheer?" ejaculated poor old Sally Wetherley, in a very great flurry, letting her knitting fall, and rubbing down her own arm chair with her apron to offer it to "his honour."

But "his honour," who was in fact no less a personage than the Honourable Jasper Pierrpoint, of the Hellings, unobservant of all this attention, had taken up Johnny's sketch and was examining it very attentively.

"This really is very surprising, Honoria!" observed Mr. Pierrpoint to his daughter, addressing her as though she were his equal in age; and then turning towards the old woman: "Is it true," he demanded kindly, yet somewhat severely, "what you have assured Mr. Brewster, that except for the few cheap prints which Mr. Brewster has given your grandson, he has had no instruction in drawing whatsoever?"

"Bless your honour, Mester Pierrpoint, my Johnny never has had no larning but i' the Sunday-schule! Mester Brewster, sure enow, give Johnny some picturs, but what for I know na!" responded Sally Wetherley briskly.

"Honoria," pursued Mr. Pierrpoint, again addressing the little girl, who stood holding Johnny's sketch with a sort of proud contempt, but lowering his voice considerably; "Honoria, we must be careful in removing this lad out of the sphere in which destiny has placed him;—it seems certainly to me, that there is extraordinary genius in this rude sketch. If all be as we are assured by our excellent friend, Mr. Brewster, (and these people seem honest simple folks, incapable of deceit) we will see after placing the lad where he can obtain proper instruction. But we must be cautious, Honoria—and as you

so warmly desired to seek out the young Giotto, I will do all, my Honoria, in your name."

"But, papa, I do *not* think him a Giotto." And with an indescribable *hauteur*, the young lady laid down the little artist's sketch. "I am disappointed, papa. I think Mr. Brewster has exaggerated—but, if *you*, papa, think him a Giotto," pursued she, smiling beautifully and lovingly at her father, "I shall believe, of course, that I am wrong to be disappointed!"—and she laid her slender hand within the arm of her father, as he, having again taken the sketch, was once more examining it.

Johnny had undergone, during the last five minutes, extraordinary sensations. That bit of cartridge paper—which had given him such pleasure when only his own eyes and the eyes of his good old grandmother had rested upon it, and upon those rude lines which had appeared to him the "very moral" of his grandmother—the instant the eyes of these two strange, grand, gentlefolks fell upon them, became objects of horror;—he wished his paper were in the fire;—his cheeks burned hot as flame—he caught a sight of the sketch—oh, it was not a *bit* like his grandmother *now!* It was like nothing—it was a muddle of blots—oh, why was he standing there!—and his mouth felt so dry, and his eyes so hot,—if he were only in the turnip-field at work! "It is really very surprising, Honoria!"—the words rang through him down to his very finger and toe ends! Was his sketch extraordinary!—Did these grand, clever people who knew all about pictures say his sketch was extraordinary!—And the Honourable Jasper Pierrpoint, of the Hellings, had pictures which had been spoken of in his "Penny Magazines!" Yes, it was like his grandmother, he saw it now—it was! it was like her, and he could make the pictures of every thing he saw upon paper, *that* he could, if he might only try, instead of working in the turnip-field and straw-yard! Every word reached his ear, let Mr. Pierrpoint lower his voice ever so much.—*Genius?* he'd read of *genius*—what was it? *Remove him?*—Mr. Brewster?—honest?—oh, yes, *they* were honest!—*instruction?*—oh, thought he, would they only let him have instruction—he'd work night and day—he'd never go to bed, if he might only be instructed to paint and to make pictures! But a *Giotto*!—what did that mean? And then the beautiful young lady looked so proud, and *she* did not like the little picture; and she was *quite* right—oh dear, he wished he had never made it, he wished the ground would open under his feet and swallow him up—he felt quite "badly like"—and so confused, that when he saw his old grandmother curtseying again, and almost crying with joy—and Mr. Pierrpoint rolling up the sketch, and then holding out a golden half-sovereign towards *him*—little Johnny Wetherley!—he thought he was dreaming—and in his dream could neither move nor speak, only grew hotter and hotter! and felt his grandmother pushing his elbow, and exclaiming, "The lad's soft! the silly lad's downright soft!"—and the grand folks were gone, and his picture was gone, and he had a golden half-sovereign in his hand. But, somehow, he was more ready to cry than to do any thing else. John Wetherley had begun to learn one of the many painful lessons in the artist's "School of Life,"—a lesson which, with its bitter alternation of joy, and of self-contempt, of hope, courage, and despondency, must be repeated, with many an unrelenting severity, before John Wetherley can stand forth the humble, yet self-reliant and perfected man and painter!

Poor little Johnny! he actually did sit down on the ground and cry, holding the money in his hard little hand—such queer feelings were in his heart! He wanted his little picture, to look at it again—he cared more, after all, for it, than he did for the half-sovereign—and yet that was very fine, and he could buy some beautiful paper and paints with it—and a picture or two, perhaps, out of a print shop window in Nottingham. But oh, the beautiful young lady had looked so disdainful! Poor Johnny's vanity was wounded, and the tears streamed down faster than ever.

"Why Johnny, Johnny! where art te lad, where art te?" cried the delighted grandmother, as she came running back,

from the end of the garden where she had been watching the "gentlefolks" drive away in their carriage, which all the time had been waiting for them at the end of the elm-tree avenue. "Why thou'nt never a crying, thou big booby! thou'nt got such a heap o' money! Let's see, lad! bless thee! but thou'nt a born soft 'un, I do believe! Let a body look at the money!" and kissing and hugging her grandson, who stood silent, looking very unhappy all the time, she snatched the money out of his reluctant hands, and looking at it side-ways as she held it towards the light, continued in the highest glee: "But thou'nt a rare un, Johnny, bless thee! I'd never a thought any body 'ud a given a half-sovereign for they bits o' painting o' my old face. But they gave it thee, lad, out o' charity like; they seed we were getting very bare, Johnny, and Mester Brewster, he's always a thoughtful gentleman, had told 'em of us, that's it, lad! And now, Johnny, thou mun really buy thyself a pair o' stout ankle-boots; thine is got too bad, thou patched em up on Wednesday, I seed thee myself, with an 'oud end o' pack-thread, but they're really done for;—them will be five shillings, may happen, five and sixpence; and then, Johnny, I mun have a bit o' flannel for my rhumatis, and that will be fifteen pence—thou'll get good stout flannel for fifteen pence a yard, thou can go to Cook's, middle o' th' Long Row, or to Manlove's, that's not such a big shop and they are civil folks; and that will make—let me see—six shillings say th' boots—and mind, lad, thou get's 'em big enough, with good stout nails in 'em—and them thou can get i' Goose-gate, thou knows: but stop, I've lost my reckoning,—six shillings th' boots; fifteen pence th' flannel, that's seven and threepence; and bring us two ounces o' tea from Mester Fox's the quaker's, his tea's the best for th' money; and half a pound o' soap, and half a pound o' sugar, and that'll make—let me see! sixpence tea, twopence th' soap, sugar threepence—that's elevenpence, that'll make eight and twopence; and thou can buy thyself a pen'orth or two o' marbles, and a bit o' Giberalta rock if thou likes—and stop!—we may as well a two or three candles, and that'll make up about nine shillings, and the other shilling we'll lend poor old Dolly White, she's so badly, and Samwel out o' work, and that'll bring thee, lad, a blessing upon thy money! and them're honest folks, and I'll pay it back as soon as she can go out a washing again. But really, Johnny, thou mun be down-right soft, that thou mun, to look so glum, and thou so rich! Thou mun set off right sharp for Nottingham, the taters are just biled, and here they are we' a pinch a salt to 'em; come, make a good dinner and be off with thee! Bless thee, lad, for thou art a good 'un!" And the chattering, happy old woman, totally oblivious to her grandson's state of mind, bustled about, all the time her tongue going as fast as possible.

"I don't want no dinner, grandmother," pettishly ejaculated Johnny, roughly brushing away from the old woman as she pressed him to eat; "I don't want no dinner; and I wish you'd let me alone, that I do!"

"The Lord ha' mercy! bless us and save us! what's come all on a sudden to th' lad! Why he seems quite upset we's luck. Lord, ha' mercy! The thought of 's new boots has fair upset him, sure enough, and taen 's appetite. Johnny, lad! I'll tell thee what, I'm so proud and upset myself by th' good luck, that I think I mun e'en tell thee a secret, that I've had iver so long in my head, and that's *this*—look'e Johnny!" And with much bustle and delight she pulled out of her private drawer the splendid new comforter all so gorgeous in its scarlet and green. "There lad, there! isn't it fine? and I've knitted it all i' hidlings for thee, to give thee at Christmas; but to-day's as good as Christmas, it's so uncommon lucky! just look, and it's so warm, and thou can wrap thyself up in it ever so fine! I do think now—" soliloquised the grandmother, regarding her handiwork with undisguised pride,—"I do think, Johnny, it's the very handsomest comforter as iver I set eyes on! But the lad's gone clean off his head, I do believe; he never even looks at th' comforter, and's a putting on 's hat to set off, and without ever having taken bit or sup;—well I never would a thought of thee, Johnny, that thou could ha' been so queer, never!—

and I having knitted this beautiful comforter for thee—I wish I'd never been fool enough—but if thou'nt got the mulligrubs, I can't help it now. Here, lad, let's tie th' comforter tightly round thy throat, and be off with thee, and forget none of the things, and there's the money." Saying which, Sally Wetherley knotting the ungraciously received present round Johnny's throat till he could scarcely breathe, she opened the door, and pushing Johnny's ill-tempered looking shoulder, forth he bounced.

And that, too, as we have seen, in a tremendous rage! What a ferment was Johnny Wetherley in—wounded vanity, a strange and galling sense of injustice, which had sprung up and increased to a mighty degree within his breast, whilst his poor old grandmother was so comfortably disposing of his own especial money;—a vague sense of a world, magnificent and beautiful, to which he himself did not belong, and which had now first dimly dawned upon his startled imagination, —were the chief causes of agitation;—he could have wept, he could have laughed, and could equally have gone into a passion—which was what he finally did, as we have seen, venting his strange discomfort upon the innocent comforter!

Johnny's pride rose, as his grandmother boxed his ears, to such an unusual degree, that though the sight of her tears of vexation at another moment, would have almost broken his heart, he trudged off towards Nottingham, wishing fervently that he might enlist—might run away—might do anything, in short, desperate and bad, to punish his good old grandmother!

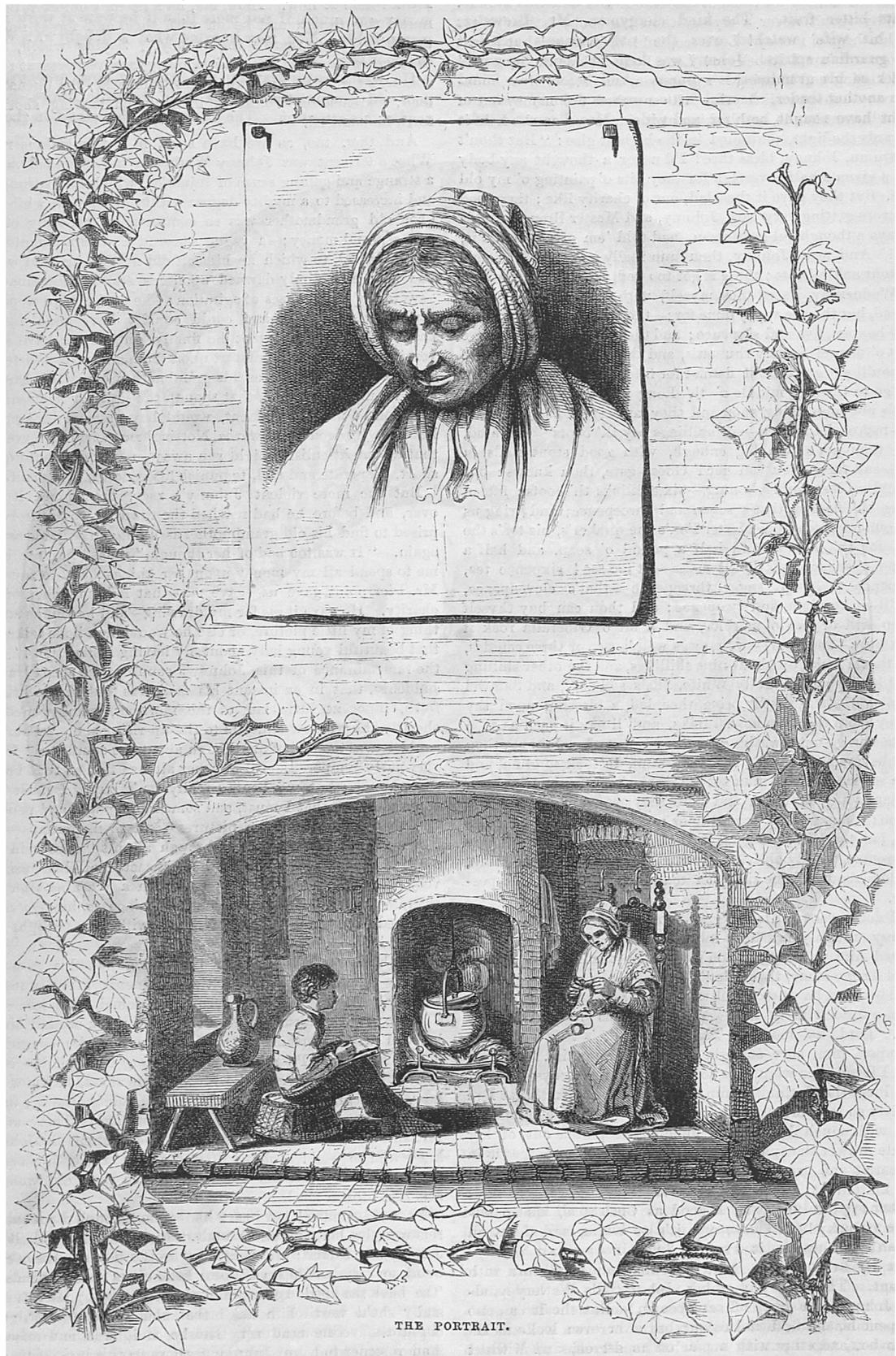
But the more violent Johnny's rage, the sooner it was over, and before he had reached the town he was quite surprised to find his old grandmother assuming an amiable aspect again. "It was too bad of her though," mused he, "to want me to spend all my money upon her things; and to say that Mr. Pierpoint gave us—gave me—that half-sovereign out of charity. He gave it me for my drawing—and he thinks something of my little picture, or else he would not have talked to that beautiful young lady about my having instruction!" At the remembrance of this, Johnny's countenance cleared up so suddenly, that in an instant his face was that of the bright, fresh, innocent little lad of the morning, who opened so cheerily the window-shutters to the up-rising sun. "Poor old soul! it was too bad of me though about the comforter! I was very nasty-tempered. I'll buy her all her things, that I will, sure enough; but my boots I really can't buy. I must buy those pictures, that I must, and some more paper and pencils, and then I'll make more pictures—and then, perhaps—" But we won't follow Johnny through all his "castles in the air;" suffice it to say, that he transacted all his business very much to his satisfaction; and with a yearning after his grandmother in his heart, which lent wings to his feet as he returned from the town, he entered the village as twilight was closing in.

But how was this? Before the cottage stood a crowd of people—lights gleamed from the casements in an unusual manner! Johnny's breath seemed snatched from him—his heart to stand suddenly still—all to grow dark around him—he was wildly rushing through the crowd, who sought to detain him!" "Poor little chap!" rang through his ears, as if it were the voice of the crowd. He stood, he knew not how, in his grandmother's chamber. Moaning, she lay upon her bed—her face was very white and strange! There stood Mr. and Mrs. Brewster—there stood the doctor—oh, Johnny knew him so well! Johnny uttered a wild cry, and, clasping his hands, fell upon his knees beside the poor old woman. She had broken her leg.

Poor old woman! her heart had gone through a process of remorse for her sharpness and testiness, pretty much as Johnny's had done; and praying "the Lord to forgive her for being so very hard upon th' poor little chap," she determined "to have the kettle boiling and the tea ready by his return," and "she'd werrit him na' more about th' comforter,—she ought t' have thought on't, that he couldn'a bide worsted!" And in order to have a regular feast upon this lucky day, she put on her cloak, and trudged off to Stafford's to buy a loaf and half a pound of treacle. It was growing dusk, and she

never noticed a slide upon which the boys of the village had been very active all day, and which was close to the shop.

was much worse, breaking her leg. Her scream, as she fell, brought out Mr. Stafford and all the neighbours. She was



THE PORTRAIT.

Down she came with a terrible shock, cutting her hand sadly with a cup which she was carrying for the treacle, and, which

picked up terribly hurt, as we have seen, and borne home upon a door. What an end was this to so promising a day!

We will not dwell upon the earlier portion of poor Sally Wetherley's illness. It was a season of bitter sorrow to poor little Johnny; but the time of trial brought its sweet as well as its bitter fruit. The kind clergyman, Mr. Brewster, and his wife, watched over the old woman's sick-bed like guardian spirits. Johnny was kept at home the whole winter as his grandmother's nurse. And before you found such another tender, cheerful little nurse as Johnny was, you might have sought both far and wide. Mrs. Brewster, who

card-board, she would buy them from him; and that if he succeeded—as she was sure he would—she would procure him many customers, and that thus he might make a deal of money—as much, if not more than if he were at work in the turnip-fields. You may imagine what a delight this was to the poor lad!

He was always drawing and painting now, whenever his poor old grandmother or his little domestic duties did not require his attention. The little table that stood in the win-



JOHNNY IN THE WOOD.

had her eyes and motherly heart wide open to all that passed in the village, noticed Johnny's gentle, loving care of the old woman; and her husband having long since noticed Johnny's talent for drawing, the good lady determined to turn it to account. Thus, one day on her visit to Sally Wetherley, she gave Johnny a quantity of card-board, some delicate camel's-hair pencils, and beautiful colours out of her own well-stocked colour-box, together with a pair of handscreens upon which were painted clusters of roses and pansies; and she told Johnny that if he would paint her similar groups of flowers upon the

dow was generally covered with his work, and he would sit drawing for hours, and talking to the dear old invalid. When she began to recover, as she lay in her bed she was able to read, and she would read aloud sometimes to her grandson—the book propped up before her upon pillows. It was generally "the best of books" that she read, or "Pilgrim's Progress." She read very slowly, it is true, and miscalled names somewhat, but Johnny in those days was no critic: the slowness only perhaps impressed the beautiful, affecting histories of the Bible, and the quaint marvels of the "Pilgrim's

Progress," the more deeply in his memory. Many a time in after life did these readings recur to him; he heard the lovely, blessed words falling from the dear lips of the good old woman, and they seemed words of heaven uttered in a heaven. The two hearts were wondrously knit together by this affliction and its accompanying joy. Without clearly defining it to themselves, they both felt how God often bestows the truest happiness, or rather *blessedness*, upon His children through means which appear the very opposite to happy. In the then state of their hearts, to have quarrelled about the comforter would have been impossible. Johnny never remembered that unhappy morning without a terrible pang, and yet he always wished to remember it; and as a lesson to himself, he hung the comforter on a nail near the window, so that it might constantly be before his eyes.

The painting of the screens succeeded marvellously, and, besides screens, Johnny painted for Mrs. Brewster and her friends needle-books and card-racks, and the paste-board sides for bags, or *reticules* as they were called in those days. Mrs. Brewster brought Johnny a number of her own drawings of flowers; and from these Johnny composed extraordinarily intricate groups, and borders, and arabesques: he quite astonished himself!—he used to dream at night of nothing but bouquets of forget-me-nots and of garlands of roses and violets. And then, when the snowdrops began to peep out of the dark mould in the parsonage garden, and there was a flush of violet crocuses in the meadows lying between Wilford and the town, and the orange crocuses in the cottage-gardens opened wide their burnished chalices, then Johnny painted flowers from nature, and was so astounded at the beauty of these lovely stars of earth, which now first revealed their wonders to him, that he was at times fairly like one intoxicated with joy and surprise.

But, though the winter was past and gone, and the joyous spring was arriving, it had not passed without its anxieties, and among them was a secret, private one, locked up in the little artist's breast. The Honourable Jaspar Pierpoint of the Hellings, and the beautiful young lady, had evidently quite forgotten him, and their intention of giving him instruction. After the first dreadful anxiety about his grandmother was over, he had so often thought about them and their words, and speculated upon them, and listened—oh, a thousand times—for their coming, and pictured to himself what they would do and say;—but they never came! Neither did Mr. Brewster, nor yet Mrs. Brewster, speak of them. Johnny wished at times he could forget all about them; but this he could not, do whatever he would.

One gusty February afternoon, when all the country was dreary with the swollen waters from the Trent,—when the pale, feeble rays of a struggling sun, breaking through a sky heavy with leaden clouds, gleamed mournfully upon the vast expanse of muddy waters which covered the meadows lying between the village and the town,—when there was a melancholy drip, drip, from the heavy cottage eaves, and the trees, and hedges, and gardens, had as dank and hopeless an air as in November,—old Dolly White, looking in towards twilight for a gossip with Johnny's grandmother, began dilating upon the great funeral of old Lady De Callis, which her son had seen wending its way along the mirey road from Nottingham towards the little village of Pierpoint-cum-Hellings, in the church of which, built by her grandfather, would now repose the corpse of Honoria Ethelgiva Cowdery, Baroness Cowdery, Dowager Countess De Callis.

"Lord 'a mercy," exclaimed Sally Wetherley, raising her hands piously, "and may He give th' oud lady a seat in His blessedness, and may she taste o' His tender mercies! And would you think, Dolly, we was born on th' self-same day—th' oud Lady De Callis and me!—that we was. And I mind me well, Dolly, when a' the country side was feasted at her wedding—my old man and me was a-courtin' in those days—and we'd a fine holiday like at the wedding and merrymaking up at th' Hellings. But, bless me, Dolly, you mun remember all as well as me!"

"Oh, bless you!" returned Dolly White, "that I do; and

above all, what a fuss there was some few years later, when she left her husband up i' the north, and came back with her youngest babbie—Mester Jaspar—eh, Sally? what a waste a' years lies 'tween them times and these! and th' Hellings was all a-stir again, and what queer ways she had, with all her rearing o' Mester Jaspar—th' wonder is he ever was reared at all!—she wur a queer un, depend 'on t'. She led the oud lord an uneasy life on't, I's warrant ye, Sally!"

"Folks allers said," interrupted Johnny's grandmother, who was now sitting up in her bed quite excited with her reminiscences, "that Mester Jaspar took marvellous after the old lady, and they says he's th' outlandishest ways, and's a-bringing up Miss Honoria to be quite th' moral of her grandmother—bless the poor lass, but she wanted a father to be always a-caring for her, having no mother, poor thing! I hears she's nothing but men to teach her, and that she can shoot and ride like a lad—but she looks like a young lady, and a very handsome young lady any how! don't she, Johnny?" appealed the grandmother to her little grandson, who had been listening most attentively to every word of the discourse between the two old gossips.

That evening, as Johnny sat painting a bunch of forget-me-nots, he asked his grandmother to tell him all the stories about the strange old Lady de Callis and the Pierpoints that she could remember,—he had often heard things which had greatly excited his imagination, and to-night his grandmother grew quite eloquent upon a theme which was always interesting to her. And whilst she talked, Johnny arranged in his mind a scheme, and this was, to make a little present to the beautiful Miss Honoria of the forget-me-not needle-book he was painting. He had heard, in the gossip of the two women, that she and her father had been away in London all the winter, and this had considerably soothed the slight irritation which he had felt whenever the name of Pierpoint fell upon his ear. Yes, he would paint her the loveliest little needle-book, and telling kind Mrs. Brewster whom it was for, beg her to make it up for him in the prettiest way she could, with rose-coloured ribbon and gold thread, as she made them up for her friends, and then, when Honoria returned from London, he would go to the Hellings and endeavour to see her.

And now a month has passed since this gusty February afternoon. The brisk winds of March have blown through the country, clearing the heavens and dyeing them with deepest azure, and summoning forth buds and bells from the vigorous old earth, and flushing the hedge-rows and groves with the russet and violet of kindling life. Johnny Wetherley is on his way to the Hellings, with the needle-book laid, together with a variety of little pictures, in a basket, and with a great anxiety and tremor lying in his heart.

He sees the smoke rising from the many-chimneyed roof of the Hellings, which lies low among its woods—he hears the bark of deep-mouthed hounds, ascending to him from the old mansion—he hears the crowing of cocks shrilly pealing through the quiet morning air—he hears and sees the innumerable rooks who fitfully career and caw around the tall elms which skirt the widely-extending out-buildings—he sees the sunlight gleam and glitter upon the tall vane of the weather-cock like a brilliant star—he sees it gleam and glitter upon the sullen water which fills a mossy moat which on one side crosses the closely shaven grass-plots of the small but stately garden—he sees the great hatchment with its emblazonments which hangs above the grey gateway leading up by a flagged walk to the red brick, many-windowed, many-gabled mansion—he sees the ivy-mantled griffins which guard the gateway—he sees a figure—a spot of brightest scarlet;—it appears at first upon the steps of the old mansion, then there are other figures—there is a bustle—a barking of dogs—the scarlet figure is seated upon a white pony; away it dashes, followed by two splendid hounds,—pony, scarlet figure, and hounds, rush on across the green turf of the park-like pasture field in which lies the old house. Johnny's heart leaps up into his mouth—he feels that it is the beautiful Honoria; she approaches near enough for him to see between the leafless tree branches—

though still far off—how beautiful she is in her black riding-dress,—above which she wears a wondrously dainty little scarlet jacket,—in her black velvet hat and feather, and with her splendid hounds and pony. Wild as the careering rooks above her head, she gallops round and round the great field, leaping ditches, making her pony curvet and rear, free and bold as the wind which rushes through her fair hair, that in a luxuriant mass is allowed to float beneath her velvet hat.

Johnny feels quite sick at heart,—he feels someway as though he had been bold enough to think of making a needle-book; and giving it to an angel whose abode was in heaven, where no pain or poverty ever had entered,—he felt so humbled that he sank his head down among the bright fresh primroses and wild hyacinths which were springing up through the dry brown oak leaves which carpeted the thicket where he sat, and a strange discomfort gnawed his soul.

A far stranger, far bitterer discomfort gnawed the soul of another being who was pacing that thickly-wooded hill-side. Whilst Johnny had watched Honoria so gaily riding in her scarlet jacket, joyous and strong as the brisk March morning, a mournfully brooding woman had drawn near to him, her eyes cast towards the earth; but seeing nothing there—no violets, no fresh verdure, no lovely snail-shell freshly burnished with gold and purple for the new year, no happy bird pulling bents and leaves for its building nest—those eyes only saw the phantom of a beloved, lost son.

She was Leonard's mother.

All through the winter had she ever and anon put forth in the papers appeals “to a tenderly beloved and anxiously mourned over absent son;” she had besought “L. M. to communicate with his heart-broken mother.” “As L. M. valued the earthly and eternal welfare of a parent, he was besought to write—to forgive, and all should be forgiven.” But Leonard read no paper, communicated his history to no one in the great metropolis which had swallowed him up, and thus the heart-broken mother lived on in a sickening despondency. She had quitted her brother's, and lodged in a squalid part of the town, refusing all assistance from, and all intercourse with, him. Her days were spent in restless wanderings;

she had tramped the country far and wide in search of him she had lost, ever returning with a sick hope to Nottingham, hoping—longing—that the young bird might have returned weary to the nest. She was this morning upon one of her rambles: she was always expecting to meet Leonard in some sylvan haunt—she had seen his phantom many a time standing in Clifton Grove, and other solitary spots, picking up mosses and stones and flowers; and when, with wide open arms, she had sprung towards the figure with a shriek of joy, the form had melted into a tree or bush!

Johnny heard a wild cry at his ear—a form hovered above him—he was madly clasped to a woman's heart—his eyes, his hair, his hands, his clothes were kissed—tears, hot as molten lead, burnt upon his hands, his brow—and a pair of large, bright, flashing eyes gazed at him—and then the woman flinging him with violent indignation from her, her face changed instantaneously from most passionate love to intensest anger; he saw in giddy amaze, as he cowered against a tree-stem, the woman press his little pictures, his little needle-book, and the flowers with which he had adorned his little basket, as madly to her lips—to her heart—as she had pressed him but a moment before.

“My boy! my Leonard! they have murdered thee!” shrieked in wild accents the strange woman. “Thy flowers! thy pictures! thy dear, dear pictures! they have taken them from thee, thou art despoiled, thou art slain! But vengeance! vengeance!” shrieked she, springing up a maniac. “Vengeance is mine, quoth the Lord,” and she sprang towards the tree where a moment before Johnny had stood. But Johnny had slipped down in horror and haste by a steep pathless bank, and leaping from point to point, and clinging by roots and ivy trails, had escaped, with the agility of terror, from the mad-woman.

Honoria was still careering upon her white pony over the pasture-field, but he heeded her no longer; the dogs barked with deep-mouthed echoes from the Hellings, but it was only the cry of the strange woman that rang in his ears.

Bathed in perspiration, and white as a ghost, with his clothes torn by briars and stumps of trees, panting and breathless, he burst into the cottage of his grandmother, and fell fainting upon her bed.

## THE ART OF TURNING.

TURNING is the art of giving a circular form to a variety of materials. It is employed in manufacturing articles of wood, bone, ivory, horn, marble, alabaster, stone, diamond, glass, steel, and all metals. It is an art of great antiquity, and vast importance in practical science. It includes many varieties requiring different arrangements of machinery, from the simple throwing-wheel of the potter to the complicated slide-lathe. There is great versatility in the mode of operation, but the principle is the same throughout. Thus, the material to be turned may be made to revolve round its own axis, and the cutting-tool applied to its surface so as to produce the requisite form as in the simple turning performed in the lathe commonly used by cabinet makers; or the article may be made to continue stationary while the cutting instrument revolves; or it may be made to move in some curve derived from circular motion, and the cutting-tool applied as before;—the action may be changed in a variety of ways, and all the motions may be more or less continued, but the simple mechanical operation still continues the same, and under the head “turnery” are comprehended all operations performed with the turning-lathe.

The art of turning is employed in almost every branch of manufacture; snuff-boxes chess-men, children's toys, cups and balls, cases, spinning-wheels, table legs, tools for embroidery, reels, billiard balls, and a host of other things which we daily use, we owe to the skill of the turner. When we are at

peace, he supplies all that can contribute to our comfort and convenience, in business, in pleasure, in scientific investigation; and when we are at war, he turns out pieces of artillery with a finish and perfection altogether unattainable by any other means. The cannon being cast solid, the outside cools first, with a close sound grain, and the porous or spongy parts of the metal are found in the centre. This is afterwards turned or bored out in an engine-lathe, which leaves the inner surface perfectly true, and the bore of an equal diameter.

There is no manufacturing operation so general as turning. It is used to fashion the rudest shapes, and also to bestow the highest polish. The lathe works with automatic precision. Without it the operative must labour at all parts of his work with care and trouble to produce a regular figure, and after all only partially succeed. The value and principle of the lathe has been summed up in a few words:—for every point marked by the workman it produces a circle; and is a machine for moving the material to be wrought in such a manner that, being fixed opposite to the tool, any point in the circumference will act upon the whole circle in precisely the same way.

Turnery is not only a useful branch of art, but it is one of peculiar interest, and many have found it an agreeable relaxation. In our article we do not propose furnishing a complete history or description of the process; but as there are hundreds who possess some taste for the mechanical arts to whom some